



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service
Rocky Mountain Region
Pike & San Isabel National Forests,
Cimarron & Comanche National
Grasslands
San Carlos Ranger District
3028 E. Main St.
Cañon City, CO 81212
<http://fs.usda.gov/goto/psicc/sanc>**

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USFS TO BEGIN PRESCRIBED BURNING IN SOUTHERN COLORADO

CAÑON CITY, Colo. – September 25, 2015...Fire crews from the San Carlos Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Pike and San Isabel National Forests will carry out their fall prescribed fire and slash pile burning program beginning this fall and continuing into the winter in southern Colorado. An estimated 1200 acres of broadcast burns and 1250 slash piles will be burned over the course of a few months.

Planned ignitions will begin when weather and fuel conditions become optimal for achieving management objectives while keeping smoke impacts to a minimum to surrounding communities. Weather and fuel conditions will be closely monitored and the prescribed burning program will continue as long as conditions allow.

Prescribed fire and pile burning, combined with mechanical and/or hand thinning treatments, are effective land management tools used to reduce the accumulation of hazardous fuels including old and dense vegetation. Minimizing hazardous fuels reduces fire intensity and the risk of catastrophic wildland fires. In turn, this action minimizes the risk to firefighter and public safety. Additional benefits include improved wildlife habitat, healthy and resilient landscapes and a step towards the long term sustainability of healthier ecosystems.

Each prescribed burn has a detailed prescribed fire plan developed from the comprehensive planning efforts conducted long before the project activities are initiated. The burn plan provides guidelines for what objectives are desired, when and where to burn, under what conditions to

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burn, acceptable fire behavior, organization, contingency plans for fire control, smoke management and public concerns.

Smoke from all prescribed fires is closely monitored to ensure that the conditions for smoke dispersal, developed in collaboration with the Colorado Air Pollution and Control Division, are being met. These conditions reduce the likelihood of undesired smoke impacts.

Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information see:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>

The primary objective when land managers conduct fuels reduction projects is to reduce the possibility of large wildfires which can, among other things, generate dangerous amounts of smoke. The amount and duration of lingering smoke created from small scale prescribed fires is minimal compared to the numerous dense smoke-filled days of this past summer due to the numerous wildfires in the northwest.

San Carlos Ranger District Broadcast Burning

- **Black Mountain:** Burn 1200 acres of forest land that will restore fire to the landscape. The area is located approximately ten miles north of Gardner in Huerfano County.

San Carlos Ranger District Pile Burning

- **Black Mountain Piles:** Burn piles containing debris from thinning operations to reduce hazardous fuels will be burned. The 400 burn piles are located approximately ten miles north of Gardner in Huerfano County.
- **12-Mile Piles:** Burn piles containing slash from thinning operations will be burned. The 400 piles are located approximately one quarter mile southeast of San Isabel as well as along State Highway 78, 4 miles North/Northeast of San Isabel in Custer and Pueblo Counties.
- **Alvarado Piles:** Burn piles containing slash material from thinning will be burned. The 250 burn piles are located eight miles southwest of Westcliffe in Custer County.
- **Oak Creek Piles:** Burn piles containing slash material from the thinning in the campground will be burned. The 200 burn piles are approximately nine miles south of Cañon City in Fremont County.

For more information contact Dennis Page, USFS Fire Management Specialist, 719-269-8584, or dpag@fs.fed.us. You may also follow us on Twitter: @PSICC_NF for updates. Look for and use the hashtags: #SanCarlosRD and #BlackMtnRx and #12MileRx

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